

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, HO

SUBJECT: CONTINUING REACTION TO HIGH LEVEL COMMISSION REPORT

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 3197

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE CIVIC COMMITTEE OF HONDURAN WOMEN AND THE HONDURAN COUNCIL OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE BOTH PUBLISHED DECLARATIONS ON THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE ON THE OLANCHO EVENTS. THE DECLARATIONS STATED THAT THE COMMUNIQUE INFLAMES RATHER THAN QUIETS PUBLIC PASSIONS. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS THAT ARE STILL UNCLEAR AND THERE WILL BE CONTINUING PRESSURE TO CLARIFY THOSE ISSUES. END SUMMARY.

1. THE CIVIC COMMITTEE OF HONDURAN WOMEN ISSUED A DECLARATION ON THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE DESCRIBING EVENTS IN OLANCHO. THE MAIN POINTS FOLLOW:

(A) THE EVENTS IN OLANCHO WERE PRIMARILY MOTIVATED BY MILITARY RATHER THAN CIVILIAN PERSONNEL;

(B) THE REPORT IS UNCLEAR AND CONFUSES RATHER THAN

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CLARIFIES THE FACTS;

(C) IT IS ALSO INCONSISTENT AND ACCUSES CAMPESINOS AND LANDOWNERS OF PLOTS BUT DOES NOT DESCRIBE THESE SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES;

(D) THE COMMUNIQUE TENDS TO INFLAME RATHER THAN CALM PASSIONS; AND

(E) THE ORGANIZATION REQUESTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT REFRAIN FROM CREATING CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN SOCIAL CLASSES IN SUBSEQUENT COMMUNIQUE.

2. THE HONDURAN COUNCIL OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE (COHEP) ALSO ISSUED A DECLARATION. THE MAIN POINTS FOLLOW:

(A) THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE BLAMES ALMOST ALL SECTORS OF HONDURAN SOCIETY FOR THE OLANCHO EVENTS;

(B) THE COMMUNIQUE DEEPENS THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN LAND-OWNERS AND CAMPESINOS;

(C) ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE PRIVATE SECTOR WERE IRRESPONSIBLE AND TENDENTIOUS;

(D) THE COMMUNIQUE RAISES A QUESTION OF WHETHER LOCAL MILITARY AUTHORITIES ARE ACTING INDEPENDENTLY OF THE HIGH COMMAND; AND

(E) THE COMMUNIQUE IS INFLAMMATORY AND SHOULD BE CLARIFIED BY THE SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL.

3. THE MEDIA HAS CONTINUED TO PUBLISH AND BROADCAST MANY STORIES ABOUT THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS. SEVERAL STORIES STATE THAT GONZALO GALVEZ CASTILLO WAS KILLED BY A RELATIVE OF ONE OF THE GIRLS WHO WAS ASSASSINATED BECAUSE OF GALVEZ' SUPPOSED COMPLICITY IN THE KILLING. ANOTHER STORY REPORTS AN INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE STORY FROM COLOMBIA STATING THAT, ACCORDING TO AN AUTOPSY, FATHER IVAN BETANCOURT HAD BEEN KILLED BY BULLETS FROM AN M-1 RIFLE AND BAYONETED, THUS IMPLYING IT WAS CARRIED OUT BY MILITARY PERSONNEL. OTHER PAPERS HAVE PUBLISHED ARTICLES CONTAINING THE VIEW OF A WIDE VARIETY OF PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SECTORS ABOUT THE INCIDENTS.

4. COMMENT: THERE IS LITTLE QUESTION THAT THE OLANCHO EVENTS WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE A CONSIDERABLE DEGREE OF MEDIA COVERAGE IN THE DAYS TO COME. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT ARE STILL UNCLEAR OR UNEXPLAINED AND THERE WILL BE CONTINUING PRESSURE FROM ALL SECTORS TO CLARIFY THE POINTS STILL AT ISSUE. ONE OF THE MAJOR QUESTIONS REVOLVES ABOUT HOW THE GOVERNMENT WILL PROCEED AGAINST THE INDIVIDUALS NAMED IN THE LAST GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE.
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